

I am confident that a full and fair review will show that the new rules, developed through an extensive public process, reflect the highest standards of science-based public policy.

I also think a fair review will show the rules are needed to protect the roadless areas—areas that are valuable for wildlife, support ecosystem health and the full range of native species, serve as important sources of clean water, and provide a bulwark against the spread of invasive species such as many of the weeds that plague Colorado's ranchers.

Meanwhile, there have been some press reports suggesting that Congress might be asked to overturn the rules through legislation.

I hope those reports are wrong. I do not think that is what we in Congress should be doing. In fact, I think we should move to strengthen, not weaken, the protection of the roadless parts of our forests.

That is why I am today introducing a bill that would provide additional legal protections to roadless lands in the portion of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest within Colorado's Second Congressional District.

My bill, the "Northern Front Range Roadless Area Protection Act," would require the Forest Service to manage over 80,000 acres on the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest as "protected roadless areas." These lands—all within the Congressional District I represent—are areas that the Forest Service identified as roadless in its 1997 Revision of the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Arapaho-Roosevelt, and will be covered by the new roadless-area rules when those rules take effect. Further, most if not all of these areas would be appropriate additions to existing wilderness areas.

The Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest is within a few minutes' drive for more than 2.5 million people in the Front Range Denver-Boulder metro area. It is experiencing increasing use of all kinds, especially recreational use. So, at least with respect to some of its most valuable lands, I want to undergird the new Forest Service rules with a statutory requirement to protect the special qualities of these areas.

Under the bill, these roadless areas would be managed under the "recommended for wilderness" management category in the existing Forest Plan until Congress decides otherwise. The bill would also require the Forest Service to study and evaluate these areas and make recommendations to Congress regarding their future management. That report would be submitted within three years. The bill will thus allow the Congress the opportunity to ultimately resolve the status of these roadless lands.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is limited in scope and deals only with some of the lands in Colorado that need legislative protection. More will need to be done to respond to the pressures of growth on our national forests and other public lands. But I think it represents an important first step, and I will seek to work with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to have it enacted into law.

NORTHERN FRONT RANGE ROADLESS AREA PROTECTION ACT

SUMMARY

The bill would give interim protection to over 80,000 acres of roadless areas on the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forests in Colorado's 2d Congressional District

THE FOREST, ROADLESS AREAS, AND THE BILL

The Forest: The Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest includes more than 1.5 million acres along Colorado's northern Front Range. It surrounds Rocky Mountain National Park and contains a number of designated wilderness areas. It contains a wide range of ecosystems and topography including level grasslands and peaks rising over 14,000 feet. It includes the rugged part of the Continental Divide seen from the Denver-Boulder metro area. Because of its proximity to 2.5 million people, it is heavily used by the public, and provides vital watersheds.

Roadless Areas: The Forest Service's 1997 Revision of the management plan for the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest identified lands that qualify as roadless. The Clinton Administration developed new rules restricting certain activities in national forest roadless areas in order to protect their roadless character and other natural resource values. The Bush Administration has acted to postpone implementation of these rules in order to review their provisions. The bill would provide statutory interim protection to maintain the roadless quality of some Arapaho-Roosevelt roadless areas until Congress decides on their ultimate status.

What the bill does

Acreage Affected: The bill would apply to over 80,000 acres in 12 areas within the Second Congressional District (Boulder and Clear Creek Counties) that were identified as roadless in the 1997 forest plan. The bill would designate these areas as "protected roadless areas."

Management: The bill would require the Forest Service to manage these lands in accordance with the "recommended for wilderness" directive in the 1997 forest plan. This would: (a) prohibit timber harvesting; (b) prohibit motorized vehicles; (c) allow the location of "hard rock" minerals (gold, silver, etc.); (d) prohibit oil and gas leasing.

Grazing: The bill would specifically allow grazing to continue under existing laws.

Report: The bill would require the Forest Service to report to Congress in 3 years with their recommendations as to whether these lands should become wilderness areas or other land management status.

What the bill would not do: Designate New Wilderness Areas: The bill does not designate any wilderness areas.

Apply Forest-wide: The bill does not apply to the whole Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest only to specified roadless areas within the Second Congressional District.

Address James Peak: The bill does not include the James Peak Roadless Area.

HONORING ZENIA MUCHA'S SERVICE TO THE STATE OF NEW YORK

HON. THOMAS M. REYNOLDS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 8, 2001

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, I wish today to honor an outstanding public servant, a faithful adviser and a trusted friend.

For the past six years, Zenia Mucha has served as Communications Director and Senior Adviser to New York State Governor George Pataki. On Monday, February 12, friends and co-workers will gather at the Governor's Mansion in Albany, New York, to bid her a fond farewell as she begins her new duties as Senior Vice President for Communications with the ABC Broadcast Group.

Before joining Governor Pataki's staff, Zenia served for 14 years on the staff of U.S. Senator Alfonse D'Amato, first as a staff aid and, during his last six years of service, as Communications Director.

My own friendship with Zenia stretches back to her early days with Senator D'Amato. Like so many others, not only was I impressed by her knowledge and ability, but on countless occasions, benefited as well from her advice and counsel.

In a recent column in the New York Post, writer Cindy Adams captured Zenia's personality as well as I have ever seen in print. "She's sassy. She's brassy. She's tough. She tells it like it is. She's loyal as hell. She's brilliant."

Mr. Speaker, I know how deeply Zenia's leadership and ability will be missed in New York's Capitol, and I ask that this House of Representatives join me in thanking Zenia Mucha for her leadership and service to New York state, and that this Congress join me in extending its sincerest best wishes for her continued success.

PAYROLL TAX CREDIT

HON. THOMAS M. BARRETT

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 8, 2001

Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I introduced legislation yesterday to provide much needed tax relief to America's working men and women. Unlike other proposals currently under consideration, my bill would offer fair, across-the-board tax relief while providing a stimulus to the economy, without risking a return to the budget deficits of the 1980's and 90's.

In this period of substantial budget surpluses, most of us agree that Americans deserve a break in their taxes, but we are divided on the best way to accomplish this. President Bush has proposed a \$2 trillion package of tax cuts, the centerpiece of which is a reduction in income tax rates. Unfortunately, this proposal is flawed in two important ways: first, it relies on almost all of the Congressional Budget Office's recent forecast of an on-budget surplus of \$2.7 trillion over ten years, an amount that is by no means guaranteed. Second, the great majority of the tax relief would go to the wealthiest Americans.

The Bush proposal is not the only way to implement an across-the-board tax cut. The legislation I have introduced would provide tax relief to all working Americans in the form of a tax credit based on the amount paid in Social Security and Medicare payroll taxes, up to \$300 per individual and \$600 per couple filing jointly. At a cost of approximately \$40 billion per year, this credit would mean tax relief for each and every American who pays into Social Security and Medicare, but would not tie up the entire expected surplus. If for some reason the surplus does not meet current projections a few years down the road, we will not face a sudden deficit. In addition, there will be enough left over for other top priorities such as creating a prescription drug benefit under Medicare and improving America's schools.

Importantly, this proposal will benefit the three-quarters of Americans who pay more in